WTO Assistance for Trade Negotiation

1376. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that India has sought assistance from the World Trade Oprganisation in some specific areas of research, training and institution — building, under the $ 30 million Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Fund, set -up recently to assist developing and less developed countries in the trade negotiation process; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) At the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the WTO held at Doha, the members confirmed that technical cooperation and capacity building are core elements of the development dimension of the multilateral trading system. It was decided to develop a plan to ensure long term, secure and predictable funding for the WTO technical assistance activities. Pursuant to the mandate contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the General Council decided to convene a Pledging Conference and also to create the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund. In the Pledging Conference held on 11th March, 2002, the member governments pledged to the Global Trust Fund an amount of over 30 million Swiss Francs for the WTO to conduct the technical assistance and capacity building activities for the developing countries for their constructive and fruitful participation in the Doha Work Programme.

The Coordinated WTO Secretariat Annual Technical Assistance Plan 2002, which is being implemented lists various technical assistance activities for the developing countries including LDCs.

For India, the activities listed included Technical Missions on Trade and Competition Policy, Trade and Investment (in cooperation with the UNCTAD), Trade Facilitation, Integrated Data Base, Services, Intensive Training Course for Asia and Pacific Region to be organised in New Delhi (in cooperation with the UNCTAD) and a Regional Workshop on SPS Agreement. Further action in respect of these activities and others considered necessary will be taken in accordance with our felt needs at the appropriate time.